

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1684**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Chávez**

February 13, 2014

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An act to amend Section 35400 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1684, as introduced, Chávez. Vehicles: maximum length.

Existing law generally prohibits a vehicle from exceeding a length of 40 feet, and a combination of vehicles from exceeding a total length of 65 feet, with various specific exceptions, including a bus operated by a public agency or a passenger stage corporation, as defined, used in transit system service, other than a schoolbus, when the excess length is caused by a folding device attached to the front of the bus that is designed and used exclusively for transporting bicycles.

This bill would make a technical, nonsubstantive change to that provision.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1     SECTION 1. Section 35400 of the Vehicle Code is amended
- 2     to read:
- 3     35400. (a) A vehicle may not exceed a length of 40 feet.
- 4     (b) This section does not apply to any of the following:
- 5     (1) A vehicle used in a combination of vehicles when the excess
- 6     length is caused by auxiliary parts, equipment, or machinery not

1 used as space to carry any part of the load, except that the  
2 combination of vehicles shall not exceed the length provided for  
3 combination vehicles.

4 (2) A vehicle, when the excess length is caused by any parts  
5 necessary to comply with the fender and mudguard regulations of  
6 this code.

7 (3) (A) An articulated bus or articulated trolley coach that does  
8 not exceed a length of 60 feet.

9 (B) An articulated bus or articulated trolley coach described in  
10 subparagraph (A) may be equipped with a folding device attached  
11 to the front of the bus or trolley if the device is designed and used  
12 exclusively for transporting bicycles. The device, including any  
13 bicycles transported thereon, shall be mounted in a manner that  
14 does not materially affect efficiency or visibility of vehicle safety  
15 equipment, and shall not extend more than 36 inches from the front  
16 body of the bus or trolley coach when fully deployed. The  
17 handlebars of a bicycle that is transported on a device described  
18 in this subparagraph shall not extend more than 42 inches from  
19 the front of the bus.

20 (4) A semitrailer while being towed by a motortruck or truck  
21 tractor, if the distance from the kingpin to the rearmost axle of the  
22 semitrailer does not exceed 40 feet for semitrailers having two or  
23 more axles, or 38 feet for semitrailers having one axle if the  
24 semitrailer does not, exclusive of attachments, extend forward of  
25 the rear of the cab of the motortruck or truck tractor.

26 (5) A bus or house car when the excess length is caused by the  
27 projection of a front safety bumper or a rear safety bumper, or  
28 both. The safety bumper shall not cause the length of the vehicle  
29 to exceed the maximum legal limit by more than one foot in the  
30 front and one foot in the rear. For the purposes of this chapter,  
31 “safety bumper” means any device that is fitted on an existing  
32 bumper or which replaces the bumper and is constructed, treated,  
33 or manufactured to absorb energy upon impact.

34 (6) A schoolbus, when the excess length is caused by the  
35 projection of a crossing control arm. For the purposes of this  
36 chapter, “crossing control arm” means an extendable and retractable  
37 device fitted to the front of a schoolbus that is designed to impede  
38 movement of pupils exiting the schoolbus directly in front of the  
39 schoolbus so that pupils are visible to the driver while they are  
40 moving in front of the schoolbus. An operator of a schoolbus shall

1 not extend a crossing control arm while the schoolbus is in motion.  
2 Except when activated, a crossing control arm shall not cause the  
3 maximum length of the schoolbus to be extended by more than 10  
4 inches, inclusive of any front safety bumper. Use of a crossing  
5 control arm by the operator of a schoolbus does not, in and of  
6 itself, fulfill his or her responsibility to ensure the safety of students  
7 crossing a highway or private road pursuant to Section 22112.

8 (7) A bus, when the excess length is caused by a device, located  
9 in front of the front axle, for lifting wheelchairs into the bus. That  
10 device shall not cause the length of the bus to be extended by more  
11 than 18 inches, inclusive of any front safety bumper.

12 (8) A bus, when the excess length is caused by a device attached  
13 to the rear of the bus designed and used exclusively for the  
14 transporting of bicycles. This device may be up to 10 feet in length,  
15 if the device, along with any other device permitted pursuant to  
16 this section, does not cause the total length of the bus, including  
17 any device or load, to exceed 50 feet.

18 (9) A bus operated by a public agency or a passenger stage  
19 corporation, as defined in Section 226 of the Public Utilities Code,  
20 used in transit system service, other than a schoolbus, when the  
21 excess length is caused by a folding device attached to the front  
22 of the bus ~~which~~ *that* is designed and used exclusively for  
23 transporting bicycles. The device, including any bicycles  
24 transported thereon, shall be mounted in a manner that does not  
25 materially affect efficiency or visibility of vehicle safety  
26 equipment, and shall not extend more than 36 inches from the front  
27 body of the bus when fully deployed. The handlebars of a bicycle  
28 that is transported on a device described in this paragraph shall  
29 not extend more than 42 inches from the front of the bus. A device  
30 described in this paragraph may not be used on a bus that, exclusive  
31 of the device, exceeds 40 feet in length or on a bus having a device  
32 attached to the rear of the bus pursuant to paragraph (8).

33 (10) (A) A bus of a length of up to 45 feet when operating on  
34 those highways specified in subdivision (a) of Section 35401.5.  
35 The Department of Transportation or local authorities, with respect  
36 to highways under their respective jurisdictions, may not deny  
37 reasonable access to a bus of a length of up to 45 feet between the  
38 highways specified in subdivision (a) of Section 35401.5 and points  
39 of loading and unloading for motor carriers of passengers as

1 required by the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation  
2 Efficiency Act of 1991 (P.L. 102-240).

3 (B) A bus operated by a public agency and on those highways  
4 specified in subparagraph (A) may be equipped with a folding  
5 device attached to the front of the bus that is designed and used  
6 exclusively for transporting bicycles. The device, including all  
7 bicycles transported thereon, may be mounted in a manner that  
8 does not materially affect efficiency or visibility of vehicle safety  
9 equipment, and may not extend more than 36 inches from the front  
10 body of the bus when fully deployed. The handlebars of a bicycle  
11 that is transported on a device described in this subparagraph may  
12 not extend more than 42 inches from the front of the bus. The total  
13 length of the bus, including the folding device or load, may not  
14 exceed 48.5 feet. A Route Review Committee, established under  
15 this subparagraph, shall review the routes where a public agency  
16 proposes to operate a 45-foot bus equipped with a front mounted  
17 bicycle rack. The Route Review Committee shall be comprised of  
18 one member from the public agency appointed by the general  
19 manager of the public agency; one member who is a traffic engineer  
20 and is employed and selected by the public agency that has  
21 jurisdiction over the largest proportional share of routes among  
22 all affected agencies; and one member appointed by the labor  
23 organization that is the exclusive representative of the bus drivers  
24 of the public agency. If there is no exclusive representative of the  
25 bus drivers, a bus driver member shall be chosen by a majority  
26 vote of the bus drivers employed by the agency. The members of  
27 the Route Review Committee shall be selected not more than 30  
28 days after receipt of a public agency proposal to equip a 45-foot  
29 bus with a front mounted bicycle rack. The review shall include a  
30 field review of the proposed routes. The purpose of the Route  
31 Review Committee is to ensure the safe operation of a 45-foot bus  
32 that is equipped with a front mounted bicycle rack. The Route  
33 Review Committee, by a unanimous vote, shall make a  
34 determination of which routes are suitable for the safe operation  
35 of a 45-foot bus that is equipped with a front mounted bicycle rack.  
36 These determinations shall be consistent with the operating  
37 requirements specified in subparagraph (A). It is the intent of the  
38 Legislature that the field review required under this subparagraph  
39 include consultation with traffic engineers from affected public  
40 agencies that have jurisdiction over segments of the route or routes

1 under review, to ensure coordination with all effected state and  
2 local public road agencies that may potentially be impacted due  
3 to the operation of a 45-foot bus with a front mounted bicycle rack.

4 (11) (A) A house car of a length of up to 45 feet when operating  
5 on the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways or  
6 when using those portions of federal aid primary system highways  
7 that have been qualified by the United States Secretary of  
8 Transportation for that use, or when using routes appropriately  
9 identified by the Department of Transportation or local authorities,  
10 with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions.

11 (B) A house car described in subparagraph (A) may be operated  
12 on a highway that provides reasonable access to facilities for  
13 purposes limited to fuel, food, and lodging when that access is  
14 consistent with the safe operation of the vehicle and when the  
15 facility is within one road mile of identified points of ingress and  
16 egress to or from highways specified in subparagraph (A) for use  
17 by that vehicle.

18 (C) As used in this paragraph and paragraph (10), “reasonable  
19 access” means access substantially similar to that authorized for  
20 combinations of vehicles pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section  
21 35401.5.

22 (D) Any access route established by a local authority pursuant  
23 to subdivision (d) of Section 35401.5 is open for access by a house  
24 car of a length of up to 45 feet. In addition, local authorities may  
25 establish a process whereby access to services by house cars of a  
26 length of up to 45 feet may be applied for upon a route not  
27 previously established as an access route. The denial of a request  
28 for access to services shall be only on the basis of safety and an  
29 engineering analysis of the proposed access route. In lieu of  
30 processing an access application, local authorities, with respect to  
31 highways under their jurisdiction, may provide signing, mapping,  
32 or a listing of highways, as necessary, to indicate the use of these  
33 specific routes by a house car of a length of up to 45 feet.

34 (c) The Legislature, by increasing the maximum permissible  
35 kingpin to rearmost axle distance to 40 feet effective January 1,  
36 1987, as provided in paragraph (4) of subdivision (b), does not  
37 intend this action to be considered a precedent for any future  
38 increases in truck size and length limitations.

39 (d) Any transit bus equipped with a folding device installed on  
40 or after January 1, 1999, that is permitted under subparagraph (B)

1 of paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) or under paragraph (9) of  
2 subdivision (b) shall be additionally equipped with any of the  
3 following:

4 (1) An indicator light that is visible to the driver and is activated  
5 whenever the folding device is in an extended position.

6 (2) Any other device or mechanism that provides notice to the  
7 driver that the folding device is in an extended position.

8 (3) A mechanism that causes the folding device to retract  
9 automatically from an extended position.

10 (e) (1) A person may not improperly or unsafely mount a  
11 bicycle on a device described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph  
12 (3) of subdivision (b), or in paragraph (9) or (10) of subdivision  
13 (b).

14 (2) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of Section 23114 or  
15 subdivision (a) of Section 24002 or any other provision of law,  
16 when a bicycle is improperly or unsafely loaded by a passenger  
17 onto a transit bus, the passenger, and not the driver, is liable for  
18 any violation of this code that is attributable to the improper or  
19 unlawful loading of the bicycle.